

## Forests Ontario and Canadian Institute of Forestry to Deliver Ontario Tree Marking Course

*Tree Marking Courses provide essential training related to sustainable forest management and silvicultural practice*

**Toronto, ON, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016** – The Ontario Tree Marking Course Program was developed by the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) in 1993, and since that time managed by MNR and delivered in cooperation with the forest industry. The program will now be managed through a collaborative partnership of the Canadian Institute of Forestry and Forests Ontario. The four day program followed by an optional one day of written and field examinations for those who wish to become Certified Tree Markers, introduces forest managers to essential knowledge related to stand analysis, individual tree evaluation, habitat values and biodiversity considerations, and the interpretation of tree marking prescriptions.

Tree markers bear the crucial responsibility of making ‘cut and leave’ decisions for individual trees based on their growth, health, productive capacity, wildlife benefits and regeneration requirements. The process serves to improve the health and vigour of residual trees and allows for new regenerating trees to become established and to thrive.

Tree marking programs were first introduced in many of Ontario’s forests in the 1960s, in large part because past unsustainable practices such as product or species selective high-grading had strongly influenced forest health by reducing timber quality, growth, wildlife habitat and species composition. Science-based tree marking programs are now a requirement on Crown forests managed under one of the partial harvesting systems, and are in fact now a requirement of forest conservation bylaws in many municipalities.

Tree markers must consider treatment options at a variety of scales. Individual trees are selected for retention or removal based on indicators of vigour, risk and quality, while factors such as species composition, crown closure, stand structure, stand density, and stocking influence decisions at the stand level. Because of these complexities the program upholds a high standard of practice for silvicultural tree marking with training delivered for practicing tree markers, and at a more advanced level, for those responsible for either supervising or auditing the work of other tree markers.

Course administration will be the responsibility of the Canadian Institute of Forestry, and course delivery will be overseen and managed by Forests Ontario. Al Corlett, Director of Forest Operations at Forests Ontario, believes “the administration and delivery of the Tree Marking Course Program provides an excellent opportunity for partnership between

Forests Ontario and the Canadian Institute of Forestry. Both organizations have very complementary priorities related to the maintenance of healthy, sustainable forests, a strong history of leading forest competency training, and a commitment to maintain the current world class reputation of this program and to build on that reputation in the future.”

For more information on this program, please visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/tree-marking-courses>

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